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Alleged nomination of ex-presidents of district boards to the same boards.

* 563 Q.—Mr. C. Obi Reddi : Will the hon. the Minister for Education and Local Self-Government be pleased to state—

(a) whether it is a fact that vacancies in the nominated seats of the district boards are filled up by nominating the outgoing presidents of the said boards ; and

(b) if so, on what principle ?

A.—(a) & (b) Outgoing presidents of district boards are occasionally nominated as members because it is considered desirable to secure for the Boards the benefit of their administrative experience.

Excise

Rentals from liquor shops in Ceded districts.

* 564 Q.—Mr. G. Harisarvottama Rao : Will the hon. the Minister for Public Health be pleased to state in view of answers given to question No. 261 on 8th September 1928—

(a) whether the report said to have been called for in (a) and (b) has been received, if so, what it is ; and

(b) what is the percentage of cases in which the upset price was fixed lower than the last year's rental during the last three years in the Ceded districts and what is the percentage in which it was fixed higher ?

A.—(a) The report has been laid on the table.

(b) The Government do not have the information.

Mr. G. Harisarvottama Rao :—"May I know from the hon. the Minister for Public Health whether in view of the fact that from the report laid on the table it appears that the drink evil has increased and the number of shops has increased at any rate in two districts, he will give us an opportunity to judge of that by calling for the information asked for by me ?"

The hon. Mr. S. Muthiah Mudaliyar —"I am not able to follow, Mr. President, how the information asked for will answer the doubt raised by my hon. Friend."

Mr. G. Harisarvottama Rao :—"May I know whether the hon. the Minister will call for the information, Sir, in order that we may be able to know exactly what the effect of the policy of fixing rentals is on the number of shops ?"

The hon. Mr. S. Muthiah Mudaliyar :—"As will be seen from the answer, in two of the districts the number of shops has gone down by 7 or 8 and in two of the districts, on the advice of the Excise Advisory Committees, two shops have been newly opened. Whether the question as regards the rise or fall of rentals of the shops has any bearing on the closing or opening of shops or not, I am not able to say. If however the hon. Member is anxious about the information, I shall try and get it for him. But it is not now available."

Government policy towards prohibition.

* 565 Q.—Mr. G. Harisarvottama Rao : Will the hon. the Minister for Public Health be pleased to state in view of replies given to question No. 76 on 4th September 1928 regarding Government policy towards prohibition—

(a) what the further details of the scheme are which were under the consideration of the Government ;

(b) whether the consideration thereof has been concluded;

(c) what the final scheme is as settled by the Government; and

(d) what amount the Government propose to spend upon the scheme during the current financial year?

A.—(a), (b), (c) & (d) The subject is still under the consideration of the Government. Details have not yet been settled.

Mr. D. Narayana Raju:—"May I know how long this subject has been under the consideration of the Government and what time it will take to come to a decision?"

The hon. Mr. S. Muthiah Mudaliyar:—"In the last Council the matter was answered, and since then the matter is being considered."

Mr. G. Harisarvottama Rao:—"May I know how much time approximately the Government will take to complete the working out of the details which they say have not yet been settled?"

The hon. Mr. S. Muthiah Mudaliyar:—"Probably two or three months."

Diwan Bahadur R. N. Arogyaswami Mudaliyar:—"The question relates to the policy of the Government in regard to prohibition. I should like to know from the hon. the Minister whether by doing propaganda work he can achieve prohibition at all?"

The hon. Mr. S. Muthiah Mudaliyar:—"I believe so, Sir; it may be right or it may be wrong."

Diwan Bahadur R. N. Arogyaswami Mudaliyar:—"May I know, with reference to propaganda work, whether it is being directed towards preventing people from drinking or only for preaching moderation in drinking?"

The hon. Mr. S. Muthiah Mudaliyar:—"Propagandists will say, 'do not drink'; what effect it will have on the people it is not possible to say now." (Laughter by the Members seated behind the Treasury bench.)

Mr. S. Satyamurti:—"I think, Sir, the Government Secretaries can help us by helping us to hear the answers, instead of laughing so loudly. They are so amused at the Minister's replies; but they can restrain their amusement for the benefit of those who have to hear the answers.

"Will my hon. friend the Minister say whether, in view of the policy being said to be prohibition, any of the steps contemplated will actually amount to *prohibiting*, in its natural sense, the people who are resorting to the toddy or arrack shops from drinking, or whether such steps only amount to only *dissuading* people from drinking?"

The hon. Mr. S. Muthiah Mudaliyar:—"Prohibition by legislation or forcible means is not a part of the propaganda work, but I think prohibition is part of the effect of such propaganda work."

Mr. G. Harisarvottama Rao:—"May I know when the Government will arrange a scheme—it may not be legislation exactly, but it may be persuasion or peaceful picketting with a view to enforce prohibition?"

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The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR :—" It depends upon what sense is attached to picketting. If the hon. Member means that the Government should take steps to prevent people from entering the shops, then Government do not propose to do that; but anything short of it, they will do."

Rao Bahadur C. S. RATNASABAPATHI MUDALIYAR :—" The answer says that the subject is still under the consideration of Government. May I know if the hon. the Minister for Excise has consulted the Excise Advisory Committee and taken their opinion on this question ?"

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR :—" It was first placed before the Excice Advisory Committee and it is on their advice that all the steps are being taken."

Diwan Bahadur R. N. AROGYASWAMI MUDALIYAR :—" May I ask the hon. the Minister once again, Sir, whether this propaganda would be carried on with a view to tell the people that they should not drink at all or with a view to tell them that they should drink only with moderation ? I ask this, Sir, because moderation is not prohibition."

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR :—" I am afraid the hon. Member has not followed my answer. We will say to the people 'do not drink' and not 'drink in moderation'."

Diwan Bahadur R. N. AROGYASWAMI MUDALIYAR :—" I believe Government agency is going to be employed ?"

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR :—" As far as possible."

Mr. G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAO :—" May I know if the Minister has under consideration any scheme for enforcing prohibition by picketting or other methods ?"

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR :—" As I said, picketting is a very wide term. If the hon. Member wants any specific steps to be taken, I shall consider."

Mr. A. RANGANATHA MUDALIYAR :—" Will the agents also advise the people not to bid for shops ?"

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR :—" No."

Mr. J. A. SALDANHA :—" Is the Government going to compile any Manual called the Prohibition Manual ?"

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR :—" The hon. Member was telling the other day that he was having two books on other matters for publication. If he writes another on this subject and gives it to me, I shall consider it."

Rao Bahadur C. S. RATNASABAPATHI MUDALIYAR :—" The hon. Minister said that picketting is a very wide term. Will he prevent even peaceful picketting ?"

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR :—" If the hon. Member will tell me what he exactly means, by the word 'picketting', or if he gives me any instance, I shall try to answer."

Diwan Bahadur R. N. AROGYASWAMI MUDALIYAR :—" May I know if the Excise department agency is going to be used for stopping this drink evil ?"

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR :—" If they can possibly do it."

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Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—"With reference to the answer of the Minister to the question of my hon. Friend from Coimbatore, may I ask specifically whether it is open to volunteers, Congress or otherwise, to stand about a hundred yards, from a toddy or arrack shop and dissuade people who go there and point out the evils of drink? I say it is a peaceful and legitimate means. In that case, will the Government or the Minister representing the Government, without being tutored by the hon. the Finance Member, give an undertaking that they won't prohibit such peaceful and legitimate picketting?"

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—"I request the hon. Member to put his question in a form which is not hypothetical."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—"Will the hon. the Minister be pleased to state whether the Government will or will not prohibit an assembly of Congress or other volunteers before toddy or arrack shops using all peaceful and legitimate means in order to dissuade people from going to drink?"

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR :—"If such assembly does not disturb the public peace and if it does not offend against any other law, the Government won't prevent it."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—"With regard to the auctions held by Collectors of districts, will the Government prohibit any peaceful persuasion by Congress or other volunteers telling the prospective bidders not to bid at the auction and thereby encouraging the habit of temperance among the people?"

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR :—"It is open to any citizen of the State to go and dissuade his neighbour from bidding at the auction, and if it is peacefully done, the Government will not interfere."

Report of the Committee on the consumption of opium in East Godavari district.

* 566 Q.—Mr. B. VENKATARATNAM : Will the hon. the Minister for Public Health be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether orders have been passed on the report submitted by the Committee of Enquiry on excessive consumption of opium in East Godavari district in April 1928; and

(*b*) whether a copy of the same will be placed on the table?

A.—(*a*) The answer is in the negative.

(*b*) Does not arise.

Mr. C. RAMASOMAYAJULU :—"May I know whether the Government will be pleased to place the report of the Enquiry Committee on the table? In answer to question (*b*) asking for a copy, the answer is 'Does not arise.' I am only asking for a copy?"

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR :—"The report of the Committee along with the orders passed thereon will be placed on the table as soon as possible."